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'United by blood': race and transnationalism during the Belle Époque

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The Belle Époque, often thought to be a period defined by nationalism, also saw the remarkable global proliferation of transnational affinities – especially those centred on race. Across Europe and its settler territories, notions of pan-racial affinity spread alongside imperial nationalism, in the context of technological advancement that permitted novel imaginative possibilities. Meanwhile, texts of political imagination in Africa and Asia during this period – particularly those of pan-Africanism and pan-Islamism – demonstrate not only an awareness of the significance of racial thinking for Europe but a theorisation of the connections between Europe's racial imagination and its policies in the colonised world. The same advances in the fields of communication and travel that opened the door for new imaginative possibilities in Europe also enabled disparate communities in the colonised world to conceive of themselves, often for the first time, as collectively racialised subjects of a European world order.

KEYWORDS: colonialism, nationalism, race, transnationalism, whiteness

Introduction

There is widespread agreement among theorists and historians on the pivotal role of the nineteenth century for nationalism. It was during this century that Europe became, as one traditional history puts it, 'a society of states founded on the national principle', when an aristocratic and bourgeois 'European spirit' deteriorated in the face of passionate and popular nationalism (Schnerb 1957: 211). The very framing of the 'long' nineteenth century – from the French Revolution to the First World War – embodies this idea, bookending the period with the birth of nationalism on the one end and the explosion of intra-nationalist war on the other. It is also, of course, widely recognised that this was a century defined by imperialism, during which the control of Europe[1] and European settler states over the rest of the world grew to its fullest extent. By 1902 Cecil Rhodes could observe with equal pride and lamentation that the 'world is nearly all parcelled out, and what there is left of it is being divided up, conquered and colonised'. He thought often, he added, of annexing the planets, if only that were possible (Rhodes 1902: 190).

Yet if these truisms are commonly observed, as are the apparent contradictions between them – between the national principle on the one hand and the imperial principle on the other, between the growth of self-determination in the 'core' and the loss of it in the 'periphery' – there has been rather less discussion of another perplexing feature of this period: the explosion not simply of *national* but of various types of *trans*national thinking and practice, especially those articulated in terms of race. In Europe and its settler territories these affinities proliferated during the apparent 'age of nationalism'. Such affinities were not mutually exclusive: they could and did coexist with others, from the most hermetic nationalisms to the most internationalist anarchisms. These were no means confined to Europe. They were articulated with increasing frequency in virtually every colonised territory, representing a significant and widespread expansion of political horizons.

How should we characterise the proliferation of these affinities? Given their apparent similarities, is there a way of examining together the texts of racial imagination of both Europe and the colonised world? And what is the relationship between the growth of transnational racial thinking and the material change with which it was associated – particularly imperialism and technological advancement? In order to address these questions, I focus in this paper not on the 'long nineteenth century' but on the 'Belle Époque' from 1871 to 1914, a periodisation that I suggest brings into sharper focus the concurrence of race, transnationalism and imperialism.

Nationalism and whiteness

Traditional views of the Belle Époque have framed the period as one of peace and prosperity between two periods of war. Such views do not take into account, of course, the instability and subjugation that typified African and Asian political experiences during this period. Yet they also fail to account for the remarkable spread of transnational affinities, particularly those centred on race, which also accompanied the Belle Époque, despite their absence in the vast majority of theoretical work on nationalism. Benedict Anderson famously identified 'print-capitalism' – born of an interaction between capitalism, technology and human linguistic diversity – as a key factor in the ascendancy of nationalism. His identification of technology, language and print continues to provide a compelling framework for thinking about 'profound changes in consciousness' of large groups of people over time (Anderson 2006: 204). But such changes exhibited a more complex relationship to political affinity than can be reduced to the word 'nationalism'.

Developments associated with the Belle Èpoque have a characteristic speed —what Jürgen Osterhammel calls 'a jolt' that 'passed through the world' in the 1880s and 1890s, making the period 'not α termination of any given century but *the* fin de siècle' (Osterhammel 2014: 58). Transnational affinities had existed earlier and would continue to exist after this period, but their explosion

in such a short time and across so many disparate areas is remarkable. As Barry Buzan and George Lawson have argued, nineteenth-century technological breakthroughs 'were at least as significant as, and probably more important than, subsequent extensions of them' (Buzan and Lawson 2015: 68). Communications and travel technologies in particular had a profound relationship with new forms of transnational thinking. The telegraphic breakthrough meant that the international order that emerged during this century possessed a 'qualitatively different degree of interaction capacity' from previous centuries, generating 'a nineteenth-century discourse about the annihilation of space and time' (Buzan and Lawson 2015: 69–70). So too did other forms of technology, especially the printing press, enjoy their true apex only at this time, reaching substantial penetration across much of the world and interacting with shipping and telegraphic technologies so as to experience a qualitative transformation (for the relevance of shipping in particular, see Lee 1986: 100; Martel 2008: 410; O'Rourke and Williamson 2001: 35). This is neatly represented by the world-changing canals that open and close the Belle Époque: Suez in 1869, Panama in 1914.

In Europe and its settler territories, along with forms of nationalism, transnational political affinities were particularly prominent in movements seeking to connect peoples across formal state or imperial boundaries: in Britain, its Dominions and the US ('Greater England'); Latin America and 'Latin Europe' (pan-Hispanism, pan-Latinism); European countries (pan-Europeanism); German-speaking lands (pan-Germanism); states of the Americas (pan-Americanism); and Slavic territories (pan-Slavism). Taking these movements together, along with the extension of European formal imperialism and its attendant global hierarchies, what comes into view is a feature of the Belle Époque that appeared stark to many at the time: 'a general strengthening of the "white" position in the world', to use Osterhammel's (2014: 60) succinct formulation. This arose out of imperial power, of course, but also mass migration in the form of settler colonialism, a key component in many of the European pan-movements: 'the indispensable foundation of Empire' that 'turned whole continents white' (Ferguson 2004: 112). The end of the Belle Époque was thus a period of mourning for popular writers like Lothrop Stoddard, who lamented the shattering of 'white solidarity' (Stoddard 1920). Whiteness, as many have remarked, can often seem invisible to contemporary theorists, not least due to a 'tendency to see the Anglo-world as normative' (Belich 2009: 5; see also Schwarz 2013). Yet its visibility in scholarly work on nationalism is crucial if we are to be able to situate the importance of race within the emerging world order of the period.

Migration, travel and technological advancement in the context of capitalist imperialism – the same factors observed to have facilitated a rise in nationalist consciousness – also precipitated discourses about the racial segmentation of the world, centred on the notion of whiteness, which often exhibited scepticism about existing state or imperial boundaries at the same time as they could be profoundly nationalist in their consequences or derivations. The distinctions

that have traditionally been drawn between nationalism and trans- or internationalism are clearly inadequate in this context. To understand this, we should take into account the fact that the Belle Époque correlates roughly with what is thought to be the most intensive period of migration in human history. More than 50 million Chinese, 50 million Europeans and about 30 million Indians emigrated at this time, catalysed by the expansion of European imperialism, the subjugation of China and India and the increasing affordability of travel technologies (Manning 2012). But not all migration was equal. In disparate areas of the world, connected by settlement and culture, migration increasingly became part of a singular narrative, in which the concept of race – already 'inherently spatial' and 'predicated on externality' (Wolfe 2015: 127) – reached new heights of discursive and material power.

This process is clearly observable in what has been described by Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds as the 'white man's country' in their landmark study of European settler colonies: 'a paradoxical politics, at once transnational in its inspiration and identifications but nationalist in its methods and goals'. What was produced by this politics was an 'imagined community of white men' that 'was transnational in its reach, but nationalist in its outcomes, bolstering regimes of border protections and national sovereignty'. 'Whiteness' was 'a transnational form of racial identification … at once global in its power and personal in its meaning, the basis of geo-political alliances and a subjective sense of self' (Lake and Reynolds 2008: 3–4). In much of the 'Anglo-world', the earlier years of the Belle Époque represented a period of divinely-inspired ascendancy, widely celebrated in books, pamphlets and lectures. Travel and settlement, which had helped to precipitate new visions of an 'Anglo'-world, had also been accompanied by the establishment of new popular journalism in Britain, most prominently the *Daily Mail* in 1896 and the *Daily Express* in 1900, that buttressed and stimulated a rise in enthusiasm for the Empire (Krebs 2008: 4; MacKenzie 1989). In this way, the development of British and English nationalism during this period utilised a transnational imagination that relied upon visions of racialised global order. Imperial nationalism was always at the same time a particular form of *trans*nationalism.

One prominent example of this was the body of writing that called for forms of political union between Britain and its settler territories. Works like Charles Wentworth Dilke's *Greater Britain* in 1868 and John Robert Seeley's *The Expansion of England* in 1882 were major public successes (Schwarz 2013: 76). As Duncan Bell has shown, the demand for a united Greater Britain was the most 'persistent' and 'ambitious' response to a debate about British empire in the 1870s. The multilayered meanings of 'Greater Britain' could refer to the British Empire, the settlement colonies or even all the Anglophone countries of the world. The growth of one set of demands, for the 'creation of a global federal polity underpinned by a single nationality (or race) and governed by elective parliamentary institutions', thus represents one of the most 'audacious political projects of modern times' (Bell 2007: 6–11). These visions had not been relinquished in light of the American Revolutionary

War and subsequent independence of the US. Cecil Rhodes 'believed that the United States should and could be absorbed back into a united Anglo-Saxon empire', while the Canadian journalist John Dougall in 1885 hoped for a 'Pan-Saxon alliance' (Bell 2007: 256–7; see also Snyder 1984: 98). Indeed, contrary to many expectations, the relationship of Britain to its settler territories became closer rather than more distant during this period. This process, which James Belich refers to as 'recolonization', was both an imaginative project and one that involved 'a grand cross-class, transnational alliance', with significant results for the shaping of the global political economy (Belich 2009: 179, 367). The promotion of settler colonialism during the Belle Époque continued to rely on visions of a pure frontier being linked back to the 'decay' of modern Britain, at a time when 'faith in the capacities of the white race … was moving to the very centre of intellectual life', in a process through which 'race' became 'an ever more common, and ever more explicit, arbiter of civilization' (Schwarz 2013: 71).

Dithyrambs to Anglo supremacy, like Reverend Josiah Strong's 1885 pamphlet *Our Country*: *Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*, speculated that God was 'preparing in our Anglo-Saxon civilization the die with which to stamp the peoples of the earth' and 'massing behind that die the mighty power with which to press it'. Strong predicted 'the final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled' and suggested that 'the feebler and more abject races' might be replaced entirely by Anglo-Saxons (Strong 1885: 159–75). Works like *Our Country*, which linked Anglo supremacy to the ultimate extermination of other races, often with explicit invocation of Social Darwinism, provide examples of what Bell has described 'a call for the racial pacification of the globe', a form of 'racial utopianism' that gained particular prominence after the Anglo-Boer War in the work of figures as disparate as Cecil Rhodes, W. T. Stead, H. G. Wells and Andrew Carnegie (Bell 2014). Of course, various texts also betrayed anxiety about possible challenges to this vision. The image of invading Chinese hordes was invoked repeatedly, including by writers of the Left in settlement colonies like Australia (see Walker 2003). Such anxieties reached a paroxysm with the First World War.

Within this age of whiteness, racialised transnational affinities may have been strongest in the 'Anglo'-world, but they were by no means limited to it. One element of such transnationalism was a revived pan-Europeanism, an undercurrent that ran through the whole Belle Époque: the French National Assembly called for a United States of Europe in 1871; Norman Angell outlined a federal vision for Europe in *The Great Illusion* (1909); a group including Albert Einstein set up *Neues Vaterland* in 1914 to promote 'peaceful competition and supranational unification' in Europe (Wistrich 1994: 1–20). Never a mass-based movement, pan-Europeanism developed alongside starkly different affinities. Bismarck's turn towards expansionism during the early 1880s was followed, after his resignation, by the rise of the pan-German League, which attained a more than four-fold increase in membership between 1894 and 1900 (Snyder 1984: 46). In the US, invocations of 'Anglo-Saxonism' greatly increased during the war with Spain and

subsequent conquest and occupation of the Philippines (Kramer 2009). Meanwhile, although a Slav Congress had been held in Prague as early as June 1848, the significance of pan-Slavism grew significantly from the 1870s, fired by the Russian and Serbian wars with the Ottoman Empire. Dostoevsky, a highly committed pan-Slavist, gave a speech on Pushkin in 1880, which came to be considered a seminal statement in the history of pan-Slavism, speaking of 'the destiny of all the mighty Aryan family'. Bakunin's *Statism and Anarchy*, published in 1873, attempted to tie together the pan-Slavic project with a universalist Enlightenment anarchism (Bakunin 1990; Leithart 2011: 167–8; Snyder 1984: 27).

For many in the 'Latin world', Anglo ascendancy during the Belle Époque heralded the decline of their own fortunes, whose revival could only be expected through building competing transnational alliances on racial-cultural lines. Jules Michelet had proposed a union of Latin peoples as early as 1831, in direct confrontation with pan-Slavism. As with pan-Slavism, it took the establishment of the Belle Époque for *Latinité* to gain due prominence, partly due to the increased hostility to Germany, in works by leading cultural figures like Frédéric Mistral, Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras. Politically, the ideas of Gabriel Hanotaux – published in works like *La paix latine* and *L'Énergie française* – formed another important basis, arguing for a key imperial role for the 'Latin peoples', particularly in colonising Africa and Latin America, despite their marginalisation as a corollary to the rise of the Anglos, Teutons and Slavs.[2] This current would resurface in Mussolini's exultation of the Latin spirit whose overabundance of population and energies was 'destined' for Africa and whose natural allies might be found in a *Blocco Latino* involving Spain, France and Portugal (Fraixe et al. 2014; Giladi 2014; Nelis 2007: 399; Turda and Gillette 2014; Wesseling 2002: 37). Meanwhile, Spain's final defeat in the Americas in the *desastre del '98* prompted a surge of pan-Hispanism, with close filial ties to pan-Latinism, around the turn of the century.

The Third World's Belle Époque

I have mentioned that Europe's Belle Époque was a period of severe instability and near-constant war for much of the colonised world and semi-periphery: China's 'century of humiliation', the decisive blow against Indigenous peoples, the Berlin Conference. Yet, within this maelstrom, many concerted attempts were made to respond intellectually to the challenge of unequal interaction with Europe, giving rise to a 'striking new critical self-assertiveness' in the non-Western world (Osterhammel 2014: 67), which translated into a marked expansion of transnational affinities well outside Europe. For the colonised world and its diasporas this period was significant not only due to the formal extension of imperialism, but also because the West ceased to be what Christopher Bayly (2004: 12) has described as 'both an *exemplar* and *controller* of modernity': paradoxically, at the same time as European empires reached

their apex, the hegemony of association between Europe and modernity was breached.

The intellectual project of responding to the imperial age within the colonised and semi-peripheral territories was of considerable importance, generating 'a new vocabulary of ontological understanding', in the words of Charles Tripp (2006; see also Anderson 1998: 32). The significance of two military victories of this period – Ethiopia's victory over Italy at Adwa in 1896 and Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 – scarcely needs mentioning. Unique in modern history, their repercussions were felt across the colonised world and with deep popular feeling: in Indian villages newborns were named after Japanese generals; African American and South African church denominations took the name 'Adwa' (Bayly 2004: 461; Gebrekidan 2005: 15; Hobson 2012: 145; Mishra 2013).

But if the Belle Époque saw the emergence of organised activity in the colonies that is often considered proto-*nationalist* – the Indian National Congress (founded in 1885), Egypt's Urabi revolt (1879–1882), China's Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901) – this was also the period of the blossoming of *pan-* and *trans*national affinity in the colonised world, which often preceded or functioned alongside organised activity along apparently nationalist lines: the institutional establishment of pan-Asianism (1880), pan-Islamism (1884), pan-Africanism (1897) and pan-Indianism among Native Americans (1880), not to speak of more localised but significant religious movements like the Singh Sabha (1873), Arya Samaj (1875), Ethiopianist (1884) and Ahmadiyya (1889).[3] The transformation is so striking that by the turn of the century it has been argued that 'pan-coloured or race thinking had become *the ideology of the colonized peoples*' whose 'utopian programmes' had 'become the symbols of resistance to or protest against the injustices of European rule and the racist ideology that justified it' (Langley 1973: 9, emphasis added). From this point on, another scholar writes, 'nationalist and reformist intellectuals all over the world had to envision their future and destiny in terms of this dominant narrative about pan-national identities' (Aydin 2013: 674).

For the remainder of this essay, I want to draw on two sets of transnational political affinity in the colonised world – pan-Islamism and pan-Africanism – both of which were established in their modern forms, and flourished, during the Belle Époque. As with the pan-movements of the imperial metropoles, the spread of these movements was related to new spaces of imaginative possibility opened by technology: particularly the expansions of travel, literacy and print cultures, whose importance in political and religious movements of the colonised world during this period has long been recognised (see especially Khalid 1992, 1994; Oberoi 1994; Robinson 1993).

The proponents of pan-Africanism and pan-Islamism were directly involved in a reading of their hegemonic counterparts, a crucial contributor in the shaping of their own visions – perhaps most significantly in terms of a theorisation of whiteness and the racialised nature of sovereignty. Racist political, social and economic structures in globally dispersed locations for the first time

became systematically theorised as a 'global colour bar'. I want to suggest, finally, that our understanding of twentieth-century decolonisation must attend to the imaginative and theoretical basis, rooted in the Belle Époque, for such a profound political shift.

Pan-Islamism: a 'product of the times'

Despite some modern misconceptions, the idea of a specifically Muslim international society is a recent development. As Cemil Aydin has perceptively pointed out, 'the "Muslim world," a term referring to all Muslims in the world, simply did not exist before the mid-nineteenth century' (Aydin 2015: 162). Indeed, it was only towards the *end* of the nineteenth century, once the European colonial conquest of Muslim territories was virtually complete, that pan-Islamism became an intellectual and political force in the modern sense. Again, the periodisation is striking. The moment that has often been cited as representing the first notable stirrings of inter-Asian and pan-Islamic links against colonialism – the appeal for help against the Dutch invasion sent from the Sultan of Aceh in Sumatra to the Ottoman emperor in Constantinople – took place in 1871, thus ushering in the Belle Époque just as much as the end of the Franco-Prussian War (see Jansen 1966: 23–4). The following decades saw an increase in interaction among Muslim intellectuals, many of whom were able, in a shorter period than before, to undertake journeys that encompassed both the Muslim world and Europe. Such journeys, as Nile Green has explained in detail, coincided with the increased availability of print and delivery technologies, thus aiding the dissemination of diaries, travelogues and letters to substantial Muslim audiences and 'transforming Muslim conceptions of history and geography, of time and space' (Green 2013: 403). These trips were by no means always undertaken voluntarily. Colonial expulsions and repression played a major role, especially following the revolts in Egypt (1879–82) and India (1957), the latter having major repercussions for the flourishing of the intellectual world of pan-Islamism, as has recently been explored at length by Seema Alavi (2015).

Sultan Abdulhamid II, who ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1876 to 1909, is known for his active pursuit of pan-Islamism through the establishment of ties with Muslims worldwide, the attraction of major figures to Istanbul, and projects like the Hijaz Railway (see Voll 1982: 93). His adoption of the pan-Islamist cause was, as Yelda Demirag (2005: 187) perceptively writes, 'a counterthesis against the pan-ideologies that emerged in the West, a means of defense in the times when imperialism gathered strength'. This was also, of course, the period of the peripatetic seminal figure of pan-Islamism, Jamal-al-Din al-Afghani, whose influence was such that by 1879 virtually all of Egypt's newspapers were being run by his followers. Their attacks on colonial rule – growing in frequency and for the first time, in some cases, using colloquial

Arabic – meant that they were often suppressed by the authorities (Mishra 2013: 85–6).

The connection between pan-Islamism, imperial expansion and technological transformation was not limited to Egypt or Turkey. One significant development of this period was the rise of Muslim modernist reformers within the Russian Empire. The most prominent figure here was the Crimean Tatar journalist Ismail Bey Gaspirali (1851–1914), who had been influenced by pan-Slavism – particularly following the Crimean War and Polish Rebellion, with rising anti-Turkism within the pan-Slav movement – to propagate pan-Turkish ideas.[4] Such ideas provided crucial impetus to a swathe of later modernising and nationalist movements from Crimea and Ottoman Turkish cities to numerous Muslim minority populations in south-eastern Europe. As with other pan-movement pioneers, Gaspirali's chief vehicle was a newspaper: the Turkic-language *Tercüman* (*Perevodchik* in its Russian version), founded in 1883, which would become the longest-running such newspaper in a community that had not previously known a periodical literature. By 1895, he marvelled at the number of formerly illiterate Russian Muslims who read and even contributed to the newspaper. And by the turn of the century its readers could be found as far afield as Egypt, India and Iran (Allworth 1998: 135; Gasprali 2008; Lazzerini 1992; Tuna 2015: 116–7; Turan and Evered 2005; Voll 1982: 124).[5]

If transnational affinities during the Belle Époque were formed in the context of European debates about civilisation, imperialism and affinity, the rise of pan-Islamism at this time was no exception (see especially Aydin 2015). Key texts of pan-Islamism posited the idea of a coherent Muslim community, especially one that brought together scattered Muslims with the Ottoman Empire, as a potential bulwark against a sclerotic global order defined by racism and European standards of civilisation. One of the most interesting works in this context is by Mushir Hosain Kidwai, an Indian barrister, who became a member of the Indian National Congress and a prominent defender of the Ottoman Empire.[6] In the pamphlet *Pan-Islamism* (1908), Kidwai began by observing the 'heated controversy' in Europe over the 'meaning and future' of pan-Islamism. He excoriated Western hypocrisy on self-determination, which out of cynical motives was sympathetic to those nations that happened to find themselves in Ottoman territories it wanted to seize (Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Crete) but showed little interest in others with equally legitimate claims (Jews in Romania and Russia, Egyptians and Indians). His arguments in favour of pan-Islamism were not religious, but based on the absence of colour prejudice he attributed to Islam. Having conquered large areas of the world, he wrote, Muslims had never manifested the prejudice that 'the so-called liberal and socialistic Americans show towards Orientals and people of dark colour, or as the so-called civilised Australians and Transvaalers show towards people who are not of white colour (in the Western technical sense) even if they be their own fellow-subjects under the same sovereign' (Kidwai 1908: 9–10).

Counterposing the moral ruin of Europe to the spiritual superiority of Islam, Kidwai's vision was of an Islamic utopia that would recognise 'the equality between man and man regardless of colour and of race. Universal brotherhood shall be established, all the prejudices of race and colour and creed shall vanish' (Kidwai 1908: 18). In a striking rejection of the Anglo-Saxon 'racial utopias' that were being published contemporaneously, Kidwai wrote that it was 'the Christian, white, "discoloured," European people' who were 'fanatically prejudiced against the "coloured" and Asiatic races'; it was the whites 'who constantly disturb the amity and fraternity that should exist and which did exist under the true Islamic civilisation, the "black men" of Abyssinia, the white of Spain, the yellow of China and the brown of Asiatic countries loved one another like brothers' (Kidwai 1908: 19).

This presented a near-precise inversion of the white supremacist vision. Far from bringing peace and prosperity, European expansion had turned an Islamic utopia into a state of discord, segregation and hierarchy based on fallacious race theory (Kidwai's distaste for the very terms of European racial discourse is evident throughout the text). Worse, this was a fundamentally hypocritical racism, in which 'Australia, the Transvaal and California' were permitted to 'show colour bigotry and racial prejudice'. If on the other hand 'Tibet, China or Morocco' displayed 'any hatred towards the "Whites" … they have their subjects massacred, their cities bombarded and their towns ransacked as a punishment for their audacity in dislike the people of the white colour' (Kidwai 1908: 20). Kidwai was not alone in hoping for the adoption of Islam as the state religion of Japan, a country towards which the pan-Islamist, he wrote, was 'cast[ing] a covetous eye' (Kidwai 1908: 53). Pan-Islamism, he added, was 'spontaneous', not the result of any single man or group: '*In certain respects it can be called the product of the times*. Not only Christians have adopted Pan-Christian principles but people of other religions and races are also becoming conscious that *their very existence is threatened* if they do not wake up and unite together' (Kidwai 1908: 71, emphasis added). Pan-Hinduism and Zionism were both mentioned here.

Kidwai's *Pan-Islamism* revealed that, at least for some of its proponents, the movement was self-consciously constructed as a potential challenge to an imperial world increasingly ordered by race, in which racial and religious groups that were unable to cohere politically across existing borders would find their 'very existence … threatened'. It was precisely the racial utopianism of the Belle Époque, which Kidwai evoked in the Anglo settler colonies of Australia, South Africa and California, that necessitated the construction of a counter-project with similarly transnational scope.[7] Kidwai's conceptualisation of world politics, and his positing of pan-Islamism as a solution to its problems, lasted well into the twentieth century: one only needs to consider movements as diverse as the Khilafat Movement in India, the Nation of Islam in the US and the current 'Islamic State' to witness an enduring legacy (see Breuilly 2013; Manjapra 2010; Marable 2011.)

Pan-Africanism and the 'war of the color line'

The Belle Époque is known for the aggressive expansion of European imperialism across the African continent, a speed of imperial metastasisation previously unknown in human history. Yet for pan-Africanism, the other great pan-movement of this period in the colonised world, this was also a time of tremendous energy, during which the 'Black Atlantic' came into its own as a cultural-political world. It was a time during which peoples of African descent located at multiple vectors of the Atlantic system came to familiarise themselves with the lives of each other, to theorise their own positions within the imperial global order and to develop transnational networks of affinity and exchange.

Pan-Africanism was a complex movement whose multiplicity is sometimes overshadowed by a focus on the central diasporic institutions that were established in quick succession, including the African Association (1897), Negro Academy (1897), Pan-African Conference (1900) and the series of Pan-African Congresses thereafter. As has often been observed, these organisations represented the institutionalisation of attempts, overwhelmingly by those in the diaspora, to exert what they saw as racial leadership and to influence colonial policy on the African continent. A substantial literature has examined the key figures in these movements, their ideological inheritances and the increasing role that continent-born Africans would come to play in articulating the pan-African vision by the end of the Second World War (see especially Adi 2012; Appiah 1992; Esedebe 1994; Langley 1973; Lemelle and Kelley 1994; Mboukou 1983; Nwankwo 2014; Sherwood 2010). Just as with pan-Islamism, pan-Africanism was, as Barbara Blair has perceptively written, 'simultaneously counter-hegemonic in its aims and reflective of the very culture and system of domination against which it was reacting … a response to such exploitation and control' that 'was articulated primarily by the very Western-educated, middle-class African elite whose status had been created through participation in the colonial infrastructure' (Blair 1994: 122). A parallel version of this process might be viewed in the ecclesiastical and cultural movement known as Ethiopianism, whose many political implications stretched from South Africa to Harlem.

How should we read the pan-Africanism of the Belle Époque alongside both the myriad forms of whiteness within the metropole, and the other pan-movements of the colonised world? I want to highlight here some of the striking similarities that pan-Africanism shared with pan-Islamism by focusing on some of the writings of W. E. B. Du Bois as a counterpoint to the work of Muhsir Kidwai that I discussed earlier. Du Bois is a figure who has attracted enormous attention in this context, closely associated as he is with over half a century of pan-African organising and intellectual articulation (see especially Appiah 1985; Bornstein 2011; Chrisman 2004; Lewis 2001, 1994; Juguo 2015; Marable 1997; Zamir 2008). I want to suggest that an

analysis of Du Bois's writings on race can illustrate a range of commonalties that pan-Africanism shared with other pan-movements of the colonised world, gesturing towards the underlying material conditions out of which such movements arose.

Du Bois's involvement in the Pan-African Conference of 1900 was part of the activity he undertook in relation to his special interest in the question of the 'color-line' that he famously prophesised that year as being 'the problem of the twentieth century' (Du Bois 1987: 359). Six years later, a Japanese victory against the Russians infused his writing on race with a new sense of possibility. 'The older idea was that the whites would eventually displace the native races and inherit their lands', he wrote on October 20, 1906, 'but this idea has been rudely shaken … For the first time in a thousand years a great white nation has measured arms against a colored nation and been found wanting … The magic of the word "white" is already broken', he added; 'the awakening of the brown and black races will follow in time' (Du Bois 1982: 330).

This sparked for Du Bois his most sustained contemplation yet on the role of 'race theory' as providing discursive legitimation for the expansion of European imperial capitalism. Ideas of race hierarchy and white supremacy, though of highly dubious scientific validity, had become, he argued, 'the scientific sanction for wide-spread and decisive political action – like the disenfranchisement of the American Negroes, the subjection of India and the partition of Africa'. Such ideas upheld the imperial ideal, that 'powerful nations must rule the mass of men who are not fit and cannot be fitted to rule themselves'. And if this meant that 'commerce is arranged so as to make the dark world toil for the luxury and ease of the white', well, it was argued by whites, 'this is but the law of nature' (Du Bois 1982: 49).

By 1915, when he wrote one of his most famous articles 'The African Roots of the War', such irony – even bitterness – was central to his thinking. No longer invoking faith in the civilising mission, Du Bois excoriated the Berlin Conference as 'undisguised robbery' using 'contemptible and dishonest methods' and reiterated his earlier theorisation of racism and global white supremacy. From the time of the transatlantic slave trade, he wrote, 'the world began to invest in color prejudice' and 'the "Color Line" began to pay dividends' (Du Bois 1982: 97). Of particular interest to Du Bois was the fact that the labour movement, which had made impressive gains during the last century, had not ameliorated racism in the US, but had instead been associated with 'increased aristocracy and hatred toward darker races'. This was possible, he argued, because 'the white workingman has been asked to share the spoil of exploiting "'chinks and niggers"' (Du Bois 1982: 99).

Increased democracy within imperialist nations had therefore not weakened the imperial drive, as might have been expected, but rather provided it with a broader social base. And so wealth, which 'comes primarily from the darker nations of the world', was now being exploited by 'a new democratic nation

composed of united capital and labour' (in which labour remained the weaker partner). Only Japan had 'apparently escaped the cordon of this color bar', a fact that was 'disconcerting and dangerous to white hegemony'. China showed some signs of doing so too, but Africa was 'prostrate'. Meanwhile, 'jealousies and bitter hatreds' continued to 'fester along the color line' as workers were told that they must resist attempts by the Chinese and 'Negroes' to 'take our jobs':

> On the other hand, in the minds of yellow, brown, and black men the brutal truth is clearing: a white man is privileged to go to any land where advantage beckons and behave as he pleases; the black or colored man is being more and more confined to those parts of the world where life for climatic, historical, economic, and political reasons is most difficult to live and most easily dominated by Europe for Europe's gain (Du Bois 1982: 101).

'If we want real peace and lasting culture', warned Du Bois, '[w]e must extend the democratic ideal to the yellow, brown and black peoples'. The 'ruling of one people for another people's whim or gain must stop'. Because 'the brute fact remains the white man is ruling black Africa for the white man's gain, and just as far as possible he is doing the same to colored races elsewhere'. That 'colored' people would fight back was inevitable; 'the War of the Color Line' would 'outdo in savage inhumanity any war this world has yet seen. For colored folk have much to remember and they will not forget' (Du Bois 1982: 102–3).

Du Bois developed his notion of whiteness still further in a remarkable essay, 'The Souls of White Folk', published in his collection *Darkwater* in 1920. In this text he noted that the 'discovery of personal whiteness among the world's peoples is a very modern thing' and asked: 'what on earth is whiteness that one should so desire it?' The answer – that 'whiteness is the ownership of the earth forever and ever, Amen!' – was a lamentable one, but it represented a belief that was becoming yet more entrenched: 'Wave on wave, each with increasing virulence, is dashing this new religion of whiteness on the shores of our time' (Du Bois 2007: 18). The book, one of the most controversial of the year, was the subject of dozens of derisory reviews. It was 'a very brilliant, but hateful book' wrote Harold Laski, 'rather like what the southerner would write it if he turned negro' (Lewis 2001: 20)

In understanding how Du Bois came to these conclusions, I want to emphasise the deeply intertextual nature of his thinking. The constant stream of texts extolling whiteness, which I have discussed above, provided a textual backdrop for all discussions of this type and were of particular interest for those concerned with the futures of non-white peoples. These were precisely the texts to which Du Bois was referring to as 'the new religion of whiteness'. Two aspects of these works would have been of particular interest and concern: the celebratory narrative, often of 'racial utopia', invoking extermination of lesser races (directly referred to above by Du Bois as 'the old idea'); and the anxious narrative, which postulated that white hegemony over non-white could be

doomed. The celebratory works tend to be correlated with the early Belle Époque, a period that also saw the publication of some early 'anxious' texts, such as Alfred Thayer Mahan's essay 'A Twentieth-Century Outlook' (1897), which predicted a race war, and Charles Pearson's *National Life and Character* (1893), which warned to other whites that '[w]e shall wake to find ourselves elbowed and hustled, and perhaps even thrust aside, by peoples whom we looked down upon as servile, and thought of as bound always to minister to our needs' (Langley 1973: 271).

But it was with the First World War, at the close of the Belle Époque, that such writing reached fever pitch, in the publication of Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (1914–18), H. M. Hyndman's *The Awakening of Asia* (1919), Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* (1922), Lothrop Stoddard's *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (1920), Maurice Muret's *The Twilight of the White Races* (1925) – to mention only the most prominent examples. For these writers the First World War was read as indicating the decline, even termination, of the white races and of 'Western civilisation', which would no longer be able to keep at bay the Asiatic and African hordes beyond its borders. Hyndman, for example, saw Europe as really 'a great coterminous Colony of Asia', which had long been subject to invasions from the East that constituted 'one long record of rapine and slaughter … for five hundred years the counter-attack of Europe upon Asia has been going steadily on, and it may be that the land of long memories will cherish some desire to avenge this period of wrong and rapine in turn' (Hyndman 1919: 1; 278).

Du Bois was directly involved in this conversation. The essay I have discussed above, 'The African Roots of the War', was singled out for attack by Stoddard in his 1920 book, a fact which David Lewis rightly marks as being 'of inescapable significance'. Du Bois would go on to confront and defeat Stoddard at a highly publicised public debate in Chicago (Lewis 2001: 13–4; Taylor 1981). More than this direct involvement, however, Du Bois's writing reveals a reading of 'the religion of whiteness' at the end of the Belle Époque in order to develop a theorisation of white supremacy connecting its scientific implausibility with its material prolificacy for whites – including, increasingly, the white working class. (In 1912, three years earlier, he had resigned from the Socialist Party due to its open hostility to non-whites.) His analysis of the linkages between race and class would be developed further in his major work *Black Reconstruction*, published in 1935. Few could be better placed to assess this thinking than Du Bois who, having been educated in Harvard and Berlin, was familiar with its two major strains, attending von Treitschke's pan-German lectures in Berlin – the same lectures attended by Max Weber – and writing essays attacking Southern racism as only the sixth African American ever admitted to Harvard (see Lewis 1994: 84–94).

The views of Du Bois on race were thus shaped by the development of his own theorisation of whiteness as a global political force that emerged both from his analysis of global order and his reading of the canonical texts of whiteness. 'Slowly but surely', he wrote in 'Souls of White Folk', 'white culture

is evolving the theory that "darkies" are born beasts of burden for white folk'. Little wonder that within the world of whiteness, there was 'jealousy and strife for the possession of the labor of dark millions, for the right to bleed and exploit the colonies of the world' (Du Bois 2007: 25). There are striking associations between white supremacist texts from Mahan to Stoddard, which predicted a great world race war, and the use of this idea in the work of Du Bois and others like Marcus Garvey and Hubert Harrison. They represent in many ways a shared view of the bifurcation of a complex global political image into a struggle by those defined as racially 'white' to maintain their world hegemony. This view became increasingly important for Du Bois, and it would continue to be strongly influential, not just for him, but for the entire movement for African liberation in the twentieth century.

We can thus observe the close commonality of interests between pan-Africanism and pan-Islamism, both of which observed with deep consternation the extension of the global colour bar and the expansion and entrenchment of racism within states and empires. Such movements were not initially anti-colonial in articulation, but they were staunchly opposed to an imperial world order that utilised race as a differentiating mechanism. Henry Sylvester Williams, credited with convening the first Pan-African Conference, thus framed his African Association as dealing with grievances on racial discrimination within the British Empire rather than colonial domination per se. It was founded, as Williams put it, 'to promote and protect the interests of all British subjects claiming African descent, by circulating accurate information on all questions affecting their rights and privileges, and by direct appeal to the Imperial and local governments' (Killingray 2008: 371). As David Killingray has written, this fit within a broader pattern of colonial 'nationalisms' in the late nineteenth century that 'argued for equality and integration within a colour-blind empire, not for separation'. Williams's booklet, *The British Negro*, argued that British imperialism simultaneously 'made British' its subjects and denied them full rights due to 'colour prejudice' (Killingray 2008: 370–1).[8] At this early stage pan-Africanism was hardly incompatible with a broader view of the 'necessity' of colonialism, a belief professed by many influential figures including Du Bois (Du Bois 1987: 484).

We have seen that pan-Islamism was a vision articulated through, and at the same time as, the print cultures that expanded dramatically during the Belle Époque. Such was the case for pan-Africanism, too. This period saw the blossoming of print cultures in Africa and the African diaspora, particularly Anglophone areas, which 'saw an explosion of writing and print, produced and circulated not only by the highly educated and publicly visible figures that dominate political histories of Africa but also by non-elites or obscure aspirants to elite status', as the work of Karin Barber has outlined. These figures included 'waged laborers, clerks, village headmasters, traders, and artisans' who 'read, wrote, and hoarded texts of many kinds'; '[l]ocal, small-scale print production became a part of social life'. What we observe here are not simply 'isolated examples of the uses of literacy scattered across the continent

but the history of a remarkably consistent and widespread efflorescence – a social phenomenon happening all over colonial Anglophone Africa at the same time and with comparable features' (Barber 2006: 1–3). This flourishing of print cultures was not isolated to the continent. Following Reconstruction in the US there was an explosion in African American literacy and newspaper production: between 1865 and 1900, over 1,200 black newspapers were established (Marable 1991: 8). African American illiteracy rapidly dropped from seventy per cent in 1880 to 30.4 per cent in 1910 (Detweiler 1922: 6). During the early twentieth century, a largely bourgeois postbellum African American press gave way to an increasingly radical mass-circulation media. 'Never before had so many African Americans purchased and read newspapers produced by and devoted to the interests of their race', observes a study of this press. 'Never before had the printed word had as much impact on the everyday lives of middle- and lower-class Blacks' (Digby-Junger 1998: 263–4). The implications of this efflorescence of print for political affinity – as with the other movements of the period – are far more complex than the 'nationalism' allowed for in Benedict Anderson's original formulation.

Conclusions

Terence Ranger famously noted the juxtaposition in the final three decades of the nineteenth century of 'a great flowering of European invented tradition – ecclesiastical, educational, military, republican, monarchical' with the European colonial rush into Africa (Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012: 211). In this paper I suggest that we can address this juxtaposition through a reading of works of pan-racial imagination in Europe, Africa and Asia. As European imperialism expanded, so did the notion among its actors that they were involved in projects of remaking the world along racial lines, many of them generating texts that can be connected by the idea of 'whiteness'. Such racial ideas thus accompanied imperial nationalism in the context of technological advancement that permitted novel imaginative possibilities.

One manifestation of this was the imagining of what Duncan Bell (2014) has called 'racial utopias', which posited as a solution to fundamental problems of humanity the physical spread of Anglo-Saxon bodies and the displacement or extermination of others. The period was also marked by a broader, pan-European development (in both 'high' and 'low' cultures) of racial and civilisation thinking; this was most clearly formulated in terms of Social Darwinism, but also in the development of notions of racial affinity between specific European groups scattered across borders. This discursive landscape was etched in myriad forms onto the domestic and imperial policies of the major powers of the Belle Époque. One of its major instantiations was the development of the 'global colour bar', a network of policies of racial discrimination designed to uphold the supremacy of those designated 'white' in the metropole and the colony – especially the settler colony.

Meanwhile, texts of political imagination in Africa and Asia during this period demonstrate not only an awareness of the significance of racial thinking for Europe but a theorisation of the connections between Europe's racial imagination and its policies in the colonised world. Such policies, particularly the global colour bar, were increasingly understood as embodying a racialisation of sovereignty that, carried to its limit, might entirely revoke the very possibility of sovereignty from non-European peoples and even permit their annihilation in favour of European settlement. The same technological advances in the fields of communication and travel that opened the door for new imaginative possibilities in Europe also enabled disparate communities in the colonised world to imagine themselves, often for the first time, as collectively racialised subjects of a European world order.

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Endnotes

1 Of course, 'Europe' was, and remains, a contested term. In this paper I do not seek to define it in rigid terms but rather accept the (sometimes contradictory) definitions provided by those who sought to theorise it. I discuss pan-Slavism as a European pan-movement, though this would have been contested; by contrast, for example, see my discussion of pan-Islamism in the Ottoman Empire.

2 The 'Latin' spirit became most closely associated with the Americas, of course, but it was not confined there. As late as 1957, the African politician Barthélémy Boganda was proposing a 'United States of Latin Africa' as an independent federal entity.

3 For these dates I take the establishment of, respectively: the pan-Asian organisation Kôakai; Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani's establishment of the first pan-Islamic magazine, *al-Urwah al-Wuthqa* (The Indissoluble Link); the founding of The African Association by Henry Sylvester Williams; the beginning of the Progressive Era; the formal establishment of the Singh Sabha movement, the establishment of the Arya Samaj movement; the formation of the Tembu tribal church; and the founding of the Ahmadiyya movement. See Hertzberg (1971: vii) and King (2013).

4 These were linked to pan-Turanism (or pan-Turanianism), the idea that various Central Asian groups share a common origin and heritage, whose name is derived from Tūrān, the Persian word for Turkistan. A Finnish philologist, Matthias Castrén, is largely credited with providing the basis for this movement (Shoup 2011: xx).

5 Tuna's analysis of the advertising in *Tercüman* shows that expanding travel options were becoming available for Muslims in the Russian Empire (Tuna 2015: 119).

6 See Wasti (1994: 260), who remarks on Kidwai's role as a cultural interpreter as a prominent European-educated Muslim and writes that despite his advocacy of the Ottoman cause, he remained 'a loyal but embittered citizen of the British Empire to the end of his days'.
7 Precisely the same locations have served as the focus of recent historical inquiry into the construction of a racialised world order. See especially Lake and Reynolds 2008.
8 A comparison of these two pioneers of pan-movements in the Third World, Kidwai and Williams, would form a promising subject of future study.

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